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Message Text

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44
ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4075
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 6829

E O 11652 GDS
TAGS PFOR CO CU
SUBJ: GOC FONMIN OFFICIAL DISCUSSES RELATIONS WITH CUBA FOLLOWING
RETURN FROM HAVANA

REF BOGOTA 6640

1. ON JULY 30 EMB OFFICERS CALLED ON UNDER SECY FOR POLIT AFFAIRS, GUSTAVO GARCIA MORENO, WHO HAD RECENTLY RETURNED FROM SIGNING AIR PIRACY AGREEMENT IN HAVANA. HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE INCOMING LOPEZ ADMIN WOULD MOVE TO RECOGNIZE CUBA DURING ITS INITIAL PERIOD IN OFFICE. HE ALSO PERSONALLY DOUBTED THAT RECOGNITION COULD BE POSTPONED UNTIL LATER THIS YEAR, IN VUUW OF WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS THE PRESSURE OF CERTAIN SECTORS OF PUBLIC OPINION.

2. DESCRIBING THE SECRECY WITH WHICH THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE ACCORD WERE CONDUCTED, GARCIA EXPLAINED THAT ALTHOUGH COLOMBIAN-CUBAN CONTACTS HAD BEEN UNDERWAY FOR ABOUT A YEAR, HE KNEW NOTHING OF THE SUBJECT UNTIL A DAY OR TWO BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR CUBA WHEN, IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS STAFF MEETING, HE WAS SUMMONED TO FONMIN VAZQUEZ'S OFFICE. VAZQUEZ GAVE HIM THE TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT,

WENT OVER IT WITH HIM, AND TOLD HIM HE WOULD BE LEAVING SHORTLY FOR HAVANA WITH FABIO LOZANO SIMONELLI (LIBERAL MEMBER OF THE
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CHAMBER OF REPS) WHO WAS WITH VAZQUEZ WHEN GARCIA ARRIVED IN

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HIS OFFICE. GARCIA RELATED HOW HE AND LOZANO HAD BEEN EXTREMELY CLOSE EVER SINCE EARLY CHILDHOOD, WHEN LOZANO'S FATHER HAD VIRTUALLY ADOPTED HIM FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF GARCIA'S FATHER.

3. GARCIA WAS STRUCK BY THE EXTREME FRIENDLINESS OF THE CUBAN OFFICIALS HE MET, ALMOST HE SAID, AS THOUGH FREQUENT CONTACTS HAD CONTINUED OVER THE YEARS. THE COLOMBIANS MISSED MEETING CASTRO BUT THEY HAD A LONG INTERVIEW WITH FONMIN ROA, WHOM GARCIA ALSO DESCRIBED AS EFFUSIVE IN HIS MANNER TO THEM. GARCIA AND LOZANO TRAVELLED OUTSIDE HAVANA, AND GARCIA WAS STRUCK BY THE AMOUNT OF EFFORT AND RESOURCES THE GOVT WAS DEVOTING TO SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS, AS OPPOSED TO THE TOTAL NEGLECT OF FORMER UPPER-MIDDLE CLASSURBAN AREAS WHICH HE SAID WERE VIRTUALLY FALLING APART. HE WAS PARTICULARLY AND FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY VOLUNTARY WORK PROGRAMS IN WHICH WHITE COLLAR WORKERS CONTRIBUTED ONE OR TWO DAYS LABOR EACH WEEK TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES.

4. GARCIA, A MODERATE CONSERVATIVE, DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE ENTHUS-IASTIC ABOUT CUBAN RECOGNITION. NEVERTHELESS, HE BELIEVES THAT DETENTE IN THE WORLD IN GENERAL HAS PROCEEDED TO A POINT WHERE, UNLESS IT CAN BE ESTABLISHED THAT CUBA CONTINUES TO ACTIVELY SUPPORT SUBVERSION ABROAD, RELATIONS SHOULD BE NORMALIZED. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE US ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH WHETHER CUBA HAD ABANDONED ITS SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES. GARCIA'S OPINION ON CUBAN RECOGNITION PROBABLY REFLECT THE ATTITUDES OF MANY GOC OFFICIALS AND POLIT LEADERS. VAKY

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